



“I have got the car for you,” he explained to Cookie, and parked a Porsche 993 in front of the club. Cookie was, however, deeply disappointed. The car was too polished, too well-behaved and cultivated. But Zodiac didn’t become discouraged in his proselytization, and a short while later he rang again. Now he had really found the right Porsche, and delivered the 964 that Cookie has been driving ever since. Formulated somewhat romantically, it was love at first sight. The price was okay; however, the 26-year-old operator of what at the time were half-legal clubs and the first of Berlin-Mitte’s hip bars, spent a long time considering whether he could afford the car. Not financially but in terms of image. His girlfriend at the time advised him against it. How could he, she asked him after the first test drive.

He had his doubts, especially as Berlin-Mitte at the time—at least when it came to cars and traffic—was in essence a precarious village in which social control watched over the observers of sub-cultural codes and their political correctness. After two weeks it was clear: I want this car. He bought it and has never looked back. After this purchase nightlife professionals always knew where Cookie was: a Porsche 911 was a rare thing in Mitte at the time and news of his acquisition spread like wildfire in the small bohemian scene. The new arrivals from Munich and Stuttgart were happy, the hipsters from East Germany frowned. While ordering a second latte in Café Bravo, Melanie, a good friend, asked Cookie rather derisively whether he would be able to buy a screw for his 911 with the profits from what she had just consumed. The anecdote says a lot about the spirit of provincialism with which the nightlife protagonists viewed that object of desire beyond their sneaker-turntable-mountain-bike world. A Porsche 911 was viewed with suspicion, even though it never came to any acts of vandalism.

Cookie succeeded in irritating both the Mitte pedants and the Porsche pedants. Long before the series *Californication* hit the screens, Cookie had discovered the charm of maximum neglect when it came to the maintenance of his Porsche 911. On one occasion he didn’t wash the car for six months until people began to write funny things on it—greetings, initials, secret messages. Then the car had to go to the workshop for repairs and his friend Ralf, aka Zodiac, was horrified and had it cleaned. The Porsche had to be put through the car wash several times, recalled Cookie with a grin. However, the appearance of his 964 also undermined the pedantry of the Porsche purists in other respects. The front and rear bumpers were usually scratched before he had them re-sprayed in a ritual act. For Cookie the 911 is the ideal big city car. It is small, agile—“always quick off the mark, and the first away at the lights.” He drives so dynamically that he ends up replacing the brakes more frequently than he would like. Nevertheless, he finds the Porsche too loud for the motorway—and that for someone who usually spends his nights in a hail of sound. —